

## **ARTICLE 311 WOODWARD AREA POLICIES**

### **WOODWARD AREA LOCATION AND EXTENT**

The Woodward Area is bounded by the Fisher Freeway on the south, Lodge Freeway to the west, Chrysler Freeway on the east, and the City boundary with Highland Park on the north. It is an approximate one-mile wide by four-mile long strip of land beginning just north of the Central Business District and extending northward to the southern boundary of the City of Highland Park. The Woodward Area is divided into two subareas: Lower Woodward and Middle Woodward. Additional information on that portion of the Woodward area north of Highland Park but south of Eight Mile Road may be referenced in Article 305, North Sector, or Article 307, Northwest Sector.

### **WOODWARD AREA FEATURES AND IMPORTANCE**

The Woodward Area is Detroit's major regional transportation corridor and business spine. From the New Center area (Woodward at Grand Boulevard) to the Central Business District are concentrated a host of regional institutions such as Wayne State University and the Detroit Medical Center as well as major corporate headquarters and other businesses.

Woodward Avenue serves as Detroit's main street. It is a major point of reference for all Detroiters (dividing the City between east and west), and it is one of the faces the City shows most often to visitors. The impression Woodward projects to people plays a major role in people's impressions of Detroit and perhaps of southeast Michigan. For this reason and because of the desirability of encouraging new developments along Woodward, urban design policies are emphasized as are economic development policies.

### **WOODWARD AREA PLANNING ISSUES AND FUTURE POTENTIALS**

The Woodward Area is one of contrasts - old and new, rich and poor. It is very dynamic, with problems also representing opportunities: vacant land and buildings, under-utilized utilities, numerous bus routes. The area has major freeway access to all parts of southeastern Michigan.

It appears that service sector employment is likely to be an area of potential growth. There are over 40,000 service sector jobs in the Woodward Area. Services include: education, media and advertising, health care, communications,

retail and wholesale distribution, corporate management, and business services, and high-technology research. Together with the Central Business District, high technology functions and activities should be planned and operated as a unified and coordinated whole to provide maximum economic and social benefit to the City of Detroit and to the Detroit region as a whole. Residents of the area often have special needs representing special population groups, and are served by institutions which are concentrated in the area. The Woodward Area has many human development oriented institutions.

Woodward Avenue is the main parade route for the City and front door to many important institutions, districts, and neighborhoods. Its design and esthetic quality are major factors in the image of Detroit.

A detailed light rail mass transit proposal has been prepared to expand accessibility and stimulate economic development within and adjacent to the Woodward Area. The proposed regional light rail system is viewed both as a means of improving public transit service in the Woodward transportation corridor and as an economic development tool in a coordinated process to improve socio-economic conditions in the region and within the Woodward Area. Light rail station areas will require more concentrated planning and implementation efforts.

One of the potential benefits of a light rail system and a major concern especially in the Lower Woodward Area is the restoration of the former land use pattern which had the highest density and most intense use along Woodward Avenue. To the west of Woodward, housing development is a major need. Housing should be constructed for all income groups and family sizes in mixed developments. To the east of Woodward a comprehensive development and conservation program is needed. The light rail transit system could be most helpful in these redevelopment efforts.

□ **POLICY 311-1: Woodward Area - Population and Housing**

- Encourage an increase in population generally throughout the area, especially families with children.
- Develop housing for different household sizes and types, including new housing, rehabilitation of existing housing and infill housing utilizing both on-site construction and house moving.

- Coordinate densities: provide for greater densities near transit stations but avoid congestion and limit grade level parking.
- Insure that housing opportunities meet the needs of current residents.

□ **POLICY 311-2: *Woodward Area - Commercial Services and Facilities***

- Promote new comparison shopping facilities and family-oriented restaurants.
- Further develop New Center as a major shopping destination which complements increased retail development in downtown.
- Provide for convenience shopping and services for all residential areas, with special attention to the needs of senior citizens; consider rezoning selected areas from B4 (general business) to a less intensive zoning district classification.
- Promote increased private sector recreation and entertainment facilities.
- Develop and enforce facade maintenance, especially along Woodward.

□ **POLICY 311-3: *Woodward Area - Transportation System***

- Construct the Woodward light rail transit system and provide crosstown feeder buses to each station.
- Improve local bus service, including an increase in the number, security and comfort of bus shelters, with special attention to the needs of seniors and others with limited mobility.
- Provide for adequate vehicular circulation, avoiding conflicts with residential areas.
- Encourage left-turn only lanes as traffic warrants at major intersections.
- Develop an improved system of pedestrian and bicycle circulation.
- Improve pedestrian street crossings.

- Provide adequate parking; encourage structured rather than surface parking in densely developed areas; encourage use of well-landscaped and maintained vacant lots for parking where needed.
- **POLICY 311-4: *Woodward Area - Land Use, Urban Design, and Historic Preservation***
- Recognize and emphasize Woodward Avenue as the major symbolic street of the region; give special design attention to appearance and image, especially to improve the area near the Medical and New Centers.
  - Encourage intensive, mixed-use development along Woodward, especially near transit stops.
  - Encourage multi-purpose pedestrian-oriented centers.
  - Encourage intensive street-level activity, both in existing and new development.
  - Support existing and new residential uses in mixed-use districts, but insure adequate buffering between incompatible uses.
  - Develop open space appropriate to the needs of the surrounding community; design for a variety of activities and for security and maintenance; encourage voluntary maintenance assistance by nearby residents.
  - Recognize and protect the images of the residential neighborhoods; keep development compatible in terms of architecture, scale, texture, materials, placement, and usage.
  - Recognize and enhance the special districts (New Center, Cultural Center, Medical Center, and Cass Park); emphasize the distinctive nature of each nonresidential district through unifying elements, such as signage, street furniture, and landscaping; lessen their isolation by providing linkages such as pedestrian and bike paths, mini bus systems; relate to construction of nearby housing.
  - Recognize and protect distinctive urban spaces and vistas: especially between the Main Library and the Art Institute, views of Cass Park, views along Second toward the Fisher Building, and along Woodward toward the CBD.

- Preserve and strengthen the character of existing historic districts through landscape treatment and street resurfacing, code enforcement, and insuring that new development is compatible.
- Treat historic districts as integral and functioning parts of the overall community.
- Give special emphasis to the use and adaptive reuse of architecturally significant or historic structures.
- Use historic designation to preserve historic and architecturally significant structures, particularly where there is a viable economic use or reuse for the structure.
- Provide more leisure time opportunities, through outreach programs by area institutions, expansion of current and development of new recreation sites as needed, expansion of senior citizen recreation programs, and the inclusion of outdoor open space as leisure areas in the design of new development projects.

□ **POLICY 311-5: *Woodward Area - Economic Development***

- Maximize the economic development potential of the areas around transit stations.
- Utilize all available investment incentives.
- Promote use of existing features and attractions.
- Strengthen commercial and office areas through rehabilitation and reoccupancy of vacant structures; improvements in appearance, security, parking; and strengthening merchants organizations.
- Increase employment through upgrading job skills and increased opportunities for residents.
- Develop a technology campus to attract research and development firms, incubating new firms at the Metropolitan Center for High Technology (former Kresge headquarters), and utilizing new and existing buildings in the surrounding Cass Park area.

- Utilize and improve the Detroit Edison steam-heat system, utilizing energy from Detroit Resource Recovery plant to reduce costs; make necessary repairs and improvements; promote as a development and rehabilitation incentive.

□ **POLICY 311-6 : *Woodward Area - Crime Control and Prevention***

- Keep Police Department informed about planned developments.
- Design for security and maintenance, including environmental security techniques without the fortress image.
- Promote participation in Citizen Watch groups, security patrols, and education in security measures.
- Support alternative schools, trade schools, and work/study program to lower truancy and dropouts.
- Continue crime analysis to target priority crime.

□ **POLICY 311-7: *Woodward Area - Fire Prevention and Control***

- Promote smoke alarms in all housing units giving financial aid where needed.
- Inform and involve Fire Department persons in all development projects.
- Board vacant buildings and remove abandoned and dangerous buildings. Continue educational efforts about fire prevention.
- Encourage installation of automatic fire suppression devices.
- Expand anti-arson programs.
- Publicize restrictions on use of kerosene heaters.
- Promote increased use of fire drills for seniors and handicapped in group quarters.
- Construct a new fire station in the vicinity of Woodward and Fisher Freeway.

❑ **POLICY 311-8: *Woodward Area - Senior Citizens and Other Special Needs Groups***

- Provide support to those in greatest need, especially those living alone or in rooming houses.
- Promote alternates for housing seniors; improve health services as recommended in 1982 Needs Assessment in the Detroit Area Survey Report.
- Increase public education efforts relative to the needs of the elderly. Make special efforts to reach the isolated.
- Provide multi-use centers within senior housing developments.
- Increase emphasis on special health needs and health education of residents.
- Increase access to primary health care.
- Maintain and further develop highly responsive and sophisticated emergency system.

**LOWER WOODWARD SUBAREA BOUNDARIES AND FEATURES**

The Lower Woodward Subarea is bounded by Ford, Chrysler, Fisher, and Lodge Freeways. It includes Wayne State University, Cultural Center, Medical Center, and is immediately north of the Central Business District and south of the New Center.

**SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES, LOWER WOODWARD SUBAREA**

The area has had major clearance and rebuilding, mostly nonresidential use, and abandonment has caused further demolition of many dangerous buildings.

Residential rehabilitation, in many cases, has created larger and fewer units in the same structures. There has been a decrease in permanent resident hotels and there has been a trend toward one-person households.

Lower Woodward is home for a concentration of those in poverty, both individuals and families. Low-cost housing and numerous charity and last-recourse type services are available here. Most of the City's emergency shelter beds are located in Lower Woodward as are various food and human

services programs. Assisting in meeting the needs of the poor will remain a major social task for the foreseeable future. Lower Woodward clearly is part of the system currently serving this function.

Much of the Lower Woodward community (between the Ford and Fisher Freeways) will undergo significant changes over the next 20 years. Continuation of such City development projects as the Medical Center and Art Center will stabilize and strengthen the community. These and other ongoing projects will be joined by two highly significant new ones: light rail rapid transit, and the proposed technology campus around Cass Park, in which housing and commercial uses are mixed with offices and very light research industry.

Implementation of planned transit with stops at Mack and Warren will revitalize Woodward Avenue while reinforcing the major institutional developments that have already occurred. Significant development tools in Lower Woodward are briefly summarized: light rail transit; the Detroit Edison steam system; right-of-way and commercial frontage improvements; zoning changes; tax abatements, land write-downs, housing subsidies, and other direct aid to revenue-producing development; encouragement of corporate and institutional investment in the proposed technology campus; and historic designation and rehabilitation loans in historic and other areas.

Plans must recognize the special housing and other needs of the less affluent, the senior citizens, the young people related to the institutions, and others. The large amount of vacant and under-utilized land should be seen as a resource. The institutions need to be related to the neighborhoods and provide services to them. The commercial services are in a wide range of conditions depending on their market with the worst being in areas of greatest loss of population.

### **LOWER WOODWARD SUBAREA GOALS**

There is a great deal of potential in the Lower Woodward subarea due to its advantageous location, its wealth of strong institutions and facilities, and because of the large amount of vacant land available. Because of these factors and the eventual establishment of the light rail system along Woodward, the area will become a desirable location for new development. This new development, however, will have to be designed to appropriately blend with sound existing development and, along with the existing area institutions, be used to help address the special needs and support improved services for the current residents of the area.



❑ **POLICY 311-9: *Lower Woodward Subarea Policies***

A. University-Cultural Center Area

(Ford Freeway, Woodward, Ferry, John R, Palmer, Brush, Hancock, Cass, Forest, Second, Warren, Lodge Freeway)

- The area along Woodward Avenue within this planning unit should develop as a high-density mixed use area, with housing and ground-floor commercial, where possible. Discourage low-intensity uses such as fast-food restaurants.
- Strengthen the Cass Avenue frontage by encouraging ground-floor commercial uses in any new housing and conserve existing housing.
- Encourage construction of structured parking with at least two new structures one to the west and one to the east of Woodward Avenue.
- Encourage landscape improvements in the area.
- Encourage downgrading John R as a through street and development of cultural and art-related commercial services.
- Encourage expansion of cultural and educational institutions including the Detroit Science Center, the Children's Museum, the Museum of African-American History, the Detroit Institute of Arts, and the Center for Creative Studies.
- Institutional expansion should occur generally along Brush.
- East of Brush, encourage major new housing development to complement institution development.

B. Art Center Area

(Ford Freeway, Chrysler Freeway, Frederick, Brush, Palmer, Ferry, and Woodward)

Implement the adopted Art Center development plan, and especially encourage housing rehabilitation and new construction.

C. Medical Center Residential

(Chrysler Freeway, Spain School, St. Antoine, Hancock, Brush, Frederick)

Implement Medical Center #4 adopted project plan, and especially promote new housing.

D. Medical Center

(St. Antoine, Mack, Woodward, Alexandrine, John R, Canfield, Brush, Hancock)

- Implement and complete adopted plan including Brush pedestrian mall and Brush Plaza and a ring road.
- Develop land at Woodward and Mack intensively and appropriately.

E. Institutional Area

(Spain and Crockett Schools and Playfield)

No special actions needed.

F. Mid-City

(Hancock, Brush, Canfield, John R, Alexandrine)

- Develop the Veterans Hospital as planned.
- Develop mixed commercial-residential uses of the highest quality reflecting the importance of Woodward Avenue, and discourage freestanding fast-food establishments.

G. Brewster-Douglass Homes

(Mack, Chrysler, Fisher, Beaubien)

- Short-range maintenance and improvement is required.
- Improved retail service is needed.
- Seek increased Federal funds and alternative financing.

H. Brush Park

(Mack, Beaubien, Fisher, Woodward)

- Pursue rehabilitation and conservation as a part of a comprehensive development plan.
- Preserve the historically and architecturally significant character of Brush Park through the retention of identifiable historic residential clusters, while providing for the opportunity for a blend of new residential and commercial development.

I. Cass Park

(Martin Luther King, Woodward, Fisher, Lodge, Temple, Fourth)

- Promote research facilities for growth-oriented technology and related uses.
- Continue as a mixed-use area including residential, commercial, and institutional uses.
- Landscape appropriately, especially along Woodward.

J. Cass Corridor

(Warren, Second, Forest, Cass, King, Lodge Freeway)

- Encourage maintenance and development, especially of housing, for all income and social groups and support systems.
- Encourage improvements and conserve as much housing as possible and infill with compatible structures.
- Discourage residentially abrasive uses.
- Design to meet future traffic needs.

K. Mixed-Use Area

(Hancock, Woodward, Mack, Cass)

- Keep as a mixed-use area, including small housing units, commercial, and institutional uses. Improve Woodward appearance and landscape.
- Discourage new industry here.

L. Jeffries Homes  
(King, Fourth, Temple, Lodge)

Maintain and upgrade to the extent possible.

### **MIDDLE WOODWARD SUBAREA BOUNDARIES AND FEATURES**

The area is bounded by Highland Park, Chrysler Freeway, Ford Freeway, and Lodge Freeway. Major features include the New Center and Boston-Edison neighborhood. Wayne State and the Cultural Center are located immediately to the south.

The New Center is, after the Central Business District, Detroit's second most important commercial concentration and employer, including major offices, a hotel, and retailing. Some industry remains, especially office-related such as printing. The North Industrial area along Oakland is being developed with new industry.

### **SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES, MIDDLE WOODWARD SUBAREA**

The greatest part of the housing stock in the Middle Woodward Subarea is in good condition, even in neighborhoods where a significant amount of abandonment has occurred. In certain places, compatible infill construction could make use of vacant land. Very little relocation from development pressure should occur in this subarea. Senior citizen housing, other high-density housing, mixed-use structures, and better neighborhood shopping all should be developed along and near Woodward Avenue.

There has been a concentration of group homes in the area, which concerns many, also. There will continue to be a wide range of incomes and social groups in the area with different needs.

The impact of the three rapid transit stops, Woodward at Clairmount/Holbrook, Woodward at Grand Boulevard, and Woodward at Webb is projected to be very great as far as stabilizing the nearby residential neighborhoods and stimulating housing development and rehabilitation, but quite minimal as far as actual change in land use patterns.

In addition, commercial development is anticipated to be stimulated by the transit development. Any new construction near the transit stations would occur either

directly along or close to the current Woodward frontage. Parking at these stations should be limited to a few drop-off spaces.

Neighborhood commercial development is seen as a priority to the neighborhoods above the New Center. The viable commercial developments along Woodward should be upgraded, and the operating stores which are community-oriented along Oakland and Hamilton should be retained.

Institutional development is expected to increase. Some under-utilized industrial land near Unisys (formerly Burroughs) could be made available for an eventual expansion of non-teaching facilities for Wayne State University. The New Center area will continue to be developed, over time, to a more attractive and cohesive district. Outside of the immediate core area at Second and West Grand Boulevard, the area is characterized by many surface parking lots and underutilized industrial buildings.

#### **MIDDLE WOODWARD SUBAREA GOALS**

The New Center area will become a more intense and cohesive commercial and office area and the new development in the New Center Commons area will be completed. These factors and the light rail system along Woodward will make the Middle Woodward subarea, with its basically sound and stable residential areas, an attractive location. Improvements in the Middle Woodward Subarea include the needs of existing residents for home maintenance and commercial and recreational facilities.

##### **❑ POLICY 311-10: *Middle Woodward Subarea Policies***

###### **A. Webb-Woodland Area**

(Highland Park, City limit, Oakland, Boston-Edison northern boundary, Lodge Freeway)

- Retain, improve, and conserve existing housing units.
- Develop new housing and related commercial uses.
- Discourage low-density, automobile dependent development in anticipation of the proposed light rail transit system with a station at Woodward and Webb/Woodland.

- Encourage the development of a convenience shopping center, including a supermarket.
- Correct deteriorated conditions along and near Hamilton.

B. North Industrial  
(City limit, railroad, Caniff, Oakland)

Develop as planned with office, manufacturing, and service center facilities.

C. Boston-Edison and Arden Park Historic District  
(Subdivision boundaries)

Continue to maintain and preserve the historic houses and to enforce the Historic Ordinance.

D. Gladstone Residential Area  
(southern Boston-Edison boundary, Woodward, Clairmount, western edge of Woodward frontage, south side of Euclid, Lodge Freeway)

- Stabilize the neighborhood through housing and apartment conservation and removal of blighted and abandoned buildings.
- Provide careful monitoring of adult foster care homes in this area and prevent an undesirable concentration.

E. Woodward Frontage  
(both sides of Woodward frontage between Clairmount and excluding northern Grand Boulevard frontage, and also east side of Woodward between Arden Park and Clairmount)

- Retain the local retail and service function oriented to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Encourage construction of high-density housing along Woodward.
- Discourage automobile service uses.
- Insure high standards of development compatible with existing uses.

F. Brush-Holbrook Residential

(southern boundary of Arden Park, western boundary of Oakland frontage, Euclid, eastern boundary of Woodward frontage)

- Remove or update blighted, abrasive commercial uses along Oakland and John R.
- Remove or upgrade blighted abandoned buildings within the neighborhood.
- Provide more shopping and open space in this area or nearby.

G. Oakland Avenue Frontage

(both frontages of Oakland between Arden Park and Grand Boulevard)

- Retain the service and commercial character but on a reduced basis.
- Remove blighted and abrasive uses.
- Consolidate compatible and necessary commercial uses.
- Provide locations for additional commercial facilities with adequate parking and screening.

H. Holbrook-Cameron Residential Area

(Caniff, Chrysler Freeway, Grand Boulevard, and eastern edge of Oakland frontage)

- Prevent further deterioration of the neighborhood.
- Clear vacant abandoned structures.
- North of Holbrook, provide a combination of new housing and open space recreation, including a small community area.

I. New Center Commons

(southern property line of Euclid frontage, western property line of Woodward frontage, southern edge of Seward, Second Avenue, northern property line of Grand Boulevard frontage)

Complete the development of the area as planned, including development on remaining vacant parcels and encourage eventual expansion.

J. Chandler-Beaubien Residential Area

(Euclid, western boundary of Oakland frontage, Grand Boulevard, eastern property of Woodward frontage)

- Maintain as a residential area, with as much conservation of existing homes as is practical.
- Provide that any new development near Woodward and Grand Boulevard be of a high intensity pedestrian-oriented nature in anticipation of a light-rail transit station.

K. New Center

(eastern boundary of Woodward frontage, railroad, Lodge Freeway, northern boundary of Grand Boulevard frontage, Second Avenue, southern edge of Seward frontage, western boundary of Woodward)

- Increase major retail development.
- Strengthen as an office center and shopping area.
- Increase structured parking.
- Provide more functions and activities to make use of evenings and weekends.
- Downgrade Second Boulevard to a local street north of Grand Boulevard.
- Encourage apartment development in the northern portion of the area between Woodward and Second.

L. Unisys (formerly Burroughs) Area

(Railroad, Woodward, Ford Freeway, Lodge Freeway)

- Encourage continuation and upgrading of light industrial, commercial, and service uses.
- Encourage technology and research-oriented facilities or new housing, providing that it is well-related to institutional or other residential uses.



M. Industrial Mixed-Use Area

(Grand Boulevard, Chrysler Freeway, Ford Freeway, Beaubien, Piquette, John R, Woodward)

- Continue as an industrial and commercial district.
- Encourage high-density residential or other uses along East Grand Boulevard related to the proposed transit station.
- Encourage increased employment in the area.

N. Harper-Brush Residential

(Piquette, Beaubien, Ford Freeway, Woodward)

Maintain existing housing.